Is it happening? How do you know?

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Bullying: The Big Picture

What is bullying?

Bullying is when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way.

- **R.I.P.** (repeated, intentional, power imbalance)

Who are the bullies and who are the victims?

- Anyone can engage in bullying behavior.

- Anyone can be the victim of bullying.

- Categories of students who are more vulnerable :
  - Students who look or act different
  - LGBTQ
  - Students with disabilities
  - Students with social skill deficits

Bully/Victim Continuum

- Bully – reports bullying others (17%)

- Victim – reports being bullied by others (15%)

- Bully-Victim – reports bullying others & being bullied (8%)

- Bystander – reports observing others being bullied (60%)
    - Only 13% intervene to help victim

(Espelage & Swearer, 2003)

What does FL data say?

"Students reported to have been bullied (for any reason or no specified reason)"

- 2010-2011 Incidents of UBL or UHR – 2,389

- 2010-2011 Incidents –
  - BUL – 747
  - HAR – 249
  - SXH – 260
  - TRE – 787

Impact of Bullying on Students

- Decreased academic achievement

- Feelings of alienation/disengagement with school

- Absenteeism & truancy

- Mental health and physical health problems problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, headaches, stomachaches, loss of appetite)

- Substance abuse and delinquency

- Suicide

Hidden Problem?

- IES Report - *What characteristics of bullying, bullying victims, and schools are associated with increased reporting of bullying to school officials?* (REL 2010-No. 092)

- Survey of 5,621 12-18 year olds in 2007

- Survey found that 36% of bullying victims indicated that victimization was reported to an adult at their school and 64% did not report.

Characteristics Associated with Increased Reporting

- Bullying Victimization
  - Injury; physical threats; physical contact
  - Destruction of property
  - Frequency
  - Multiple types and locations
  - Multiple locations
  - Occurrence on bus

- Victim
  - Grade level (-)
  - Being involved in a fight
  - Fear of attack and avoidance of school areas

Characteristics Not Associated with Increased Reporting

- Bullying Victimization
  - Making fun or calling victim names
  - Excluding the victim
  - Spreading rumors
  - Forcing the victim to do things he or she did not want to do

- Victim
  - Gender
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Household region
  - Academic performance

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Laws & Policy

s. 1006.147, F.S. - Signed into law in 2008,
"Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for All Students Act"

State Law (s. 1006.147, F.S.)

Prohibits bullying and/or harassment during any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution; during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution; or through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 educational institution.

Bullying/Harassment as Defined in Florida Statutes

- "Bullying" means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students and may involve: teasing; social exclusion; threat; intimidation; stalking; physical violence; theft; sexual, religious, or racial harassment; public humiliation; or destruction of property.

- "Harassment" means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:
  - Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
  - Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
  - Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

State Law Requires school districts to adopt a policy with 14 specific components:

- Means of reporting (including anonymously)

- Means of of investigating

- Means of reporting data to the state (BUL, HAR, UBL, UHR)

- Means of notifying parents

- Instruction for students, parents, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying or harassment

- Publicizing in Code of Student Conduct and Teacher Handbooks

State Law

Distribution of safe schools funds provided to a school district shall be contingent upon and payable to the school district upon the school district's compliance with all reporting procedures.

(**As of 2012-2013, FDOE now has monitoring authority to ensure district compliance.)

Bullying and Students with Disabilities

OCR Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment & Bullying (2010)

- Clarifies relationship between bullying and disability harassment (racial & national origin, sexual, gender-based, and disability).

- Explains how student misconduct that falls under anti-bullying may also trigger anti-discrimination protections/responsibilities.

- Failure to recognize discriminatory harassment may lead to responses that fail to remedy violations of students' civil rights.

- Discusses different types of harassment and how school should respond in each case.

School's Responsibility (OCR)

- Take prompt and effective steps to end harassment

- Eliminate any hostile environment

- Prevent harassment from recurring

- May need to provide
  - Training or other interventions for larger school community
  - Additional services to student who was harassed to remedy the effects

Students with Disabilities: Review of Research

- At greater risk for being victims, bullies, and bully-victims

- Relationship between type of disability & bullying involvement

- Impact of educational setting
  - Students with "observable disability" in an inclusive setting displayed higher social competency scores
  - Students with language impairment in self-contained setting reported being bullied more than students in inclusive setting

- Prosocial behavior as a protective factor

Swearer et al., 2012

Current Research on Bullying & Students with Disabilities

- Prevalence rates – 38% reported bullying others; 67% reported victimization.

- Students with behavioral disabilities reported highest levels of bullying and being bullied.

- Students with observable disabilities more likely to bully and be victims.

- Students with non-observable disability reported similar levels of bullying and victimization as their regular education peers.

- Students with disabilities engaged in fewer prosocial behaviors than students without disabilities.

Swearer et al., 2012

What does national data say?

- **Children with disabilities were two to three times more likely** to be bullied than their nondisabled peers.

- 60 percent of students with disabilities report being bullied regularly compared with 25 percent of all students.

- Prevalence rates of bullying involvement for adolescents with an ASD was 46% for victimization, 15% for perpetration, and 9% for victimization/perpetration

- Common factors among students with ASD who were bullied: ADHD, poor social skills, and taking more general education classes.

What does FL data say?

"Students reported to have been bullied on the basis of disability"

- 2010-2011 Incidents of UBL or UHR based on disability – 56

- 2010-2011 Incidents based on disability –
  - BUL – 17
  - HAR – 4
  - SXH – 5
  - TRE – 19

Why are some students targeted more than others?

Bullies target their peers based on real or perceived differences in appearance, behavior, or ability, and many children with special needs exhibit such characteristics.

Why are students with disabilities often the target of bullying?

- Children with special needs may be overly trusting or lack knowledge of social norms, making them more vulnerable than others.

- Those with conditions that affect their appearance (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, or obesity) are particularly susceptible to name-calling.

- Children with behavioral disorders such as ADHD are often assumed to be bullies but in many cases their classmates are "egging them on" in order to evoke a reaction.

- Students with cognitive disabilities may not have the ability to understand, identify, or report bullying when it occurs.

In simplest terms . . .

Differentness contributes to vulnerability

What can be done?

Continue looking at the data, but . . .

Addressing this issue in isolation is not the answer. Comprehensive, school-wide efforts are a proactive strategy for meeting the needs of youth with disabilities, the student body at large, school staff, families, and community members.

Multi-tiered Approach

- School wide strategies
    - School policy
    - Increase adult monitoring in unstructured areas
    - Implement a prevention program
    - Improve school/classroom climate

- Targeted Interventions – for students who are chronic victims & students who are chronic bullies

- Intensive Interventions – for students who are chronic victims & students who are chronic bullies

Felix, E. & Furlong, M. (2008). Best practices in bullying prevention.

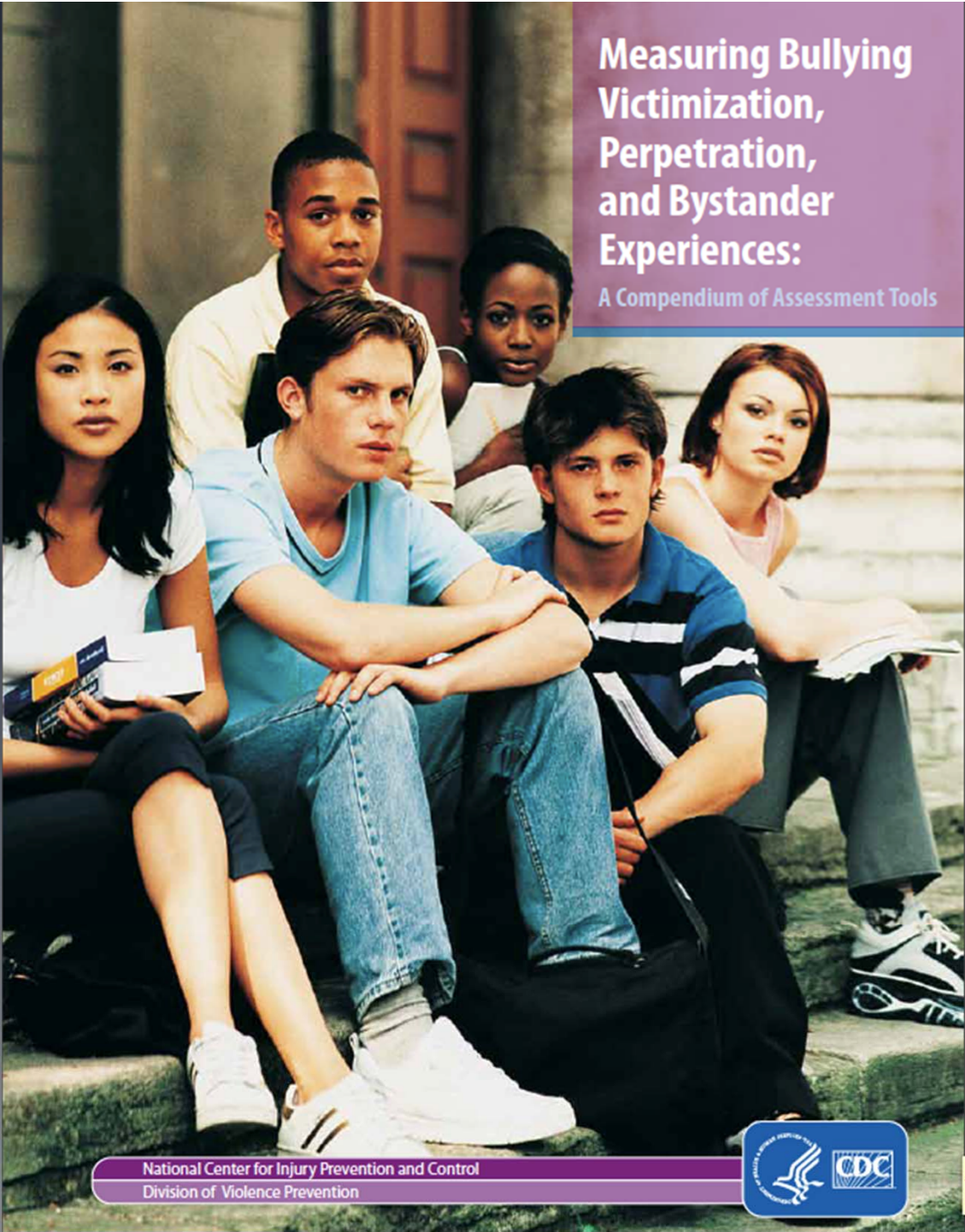# A Framework for School-Wide Bullying Prevention and Safety

National Association of School Psychologists:

Helping children achieve their best.
In school. At home. In Life.

NASP

Effective School-wide Approaches

- Establish clear practices and policies that emphasize prevention

- Regularly assess and monitor needs and effectiveness of efforts

- Implement timely and consistent intervention strategies

- Provide social, emotional, and mental health supports for students involved in bullying

- Encourage positive discipline

- Elicit engagement and commitment of all members of the community

Measuring Bullying Victimization, Perpetration, and Bystander Experiences:

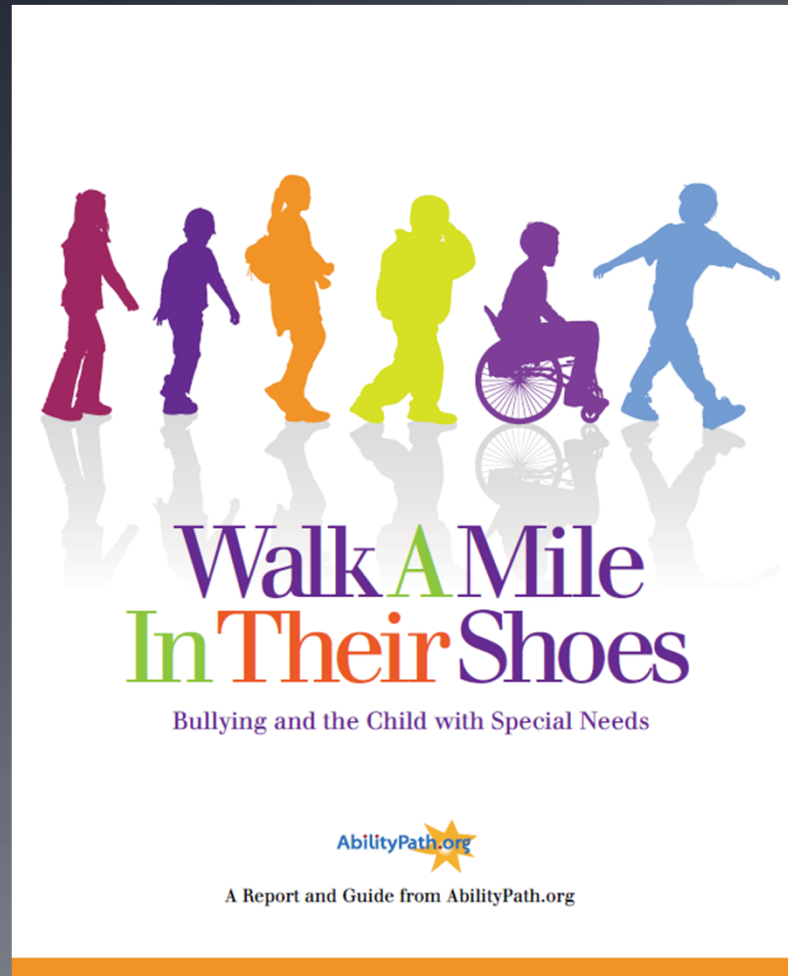A Compendium of Assessment Tools

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Division of Violence Prevention

Bullying: Prevention/Intervention for Students with Disabilities

- Target bullying behaviors by structuring a school climate that is positive and inclusive

- Prevention/interventions should emphasize the teaching of prosocial skills regardless of disability status (use regular education students as peer models)

- Support integration of students with observable disabilities into general education classes

- Teach strategies to cope with peer victimization

- Implement social and emotional learning initiatives (www.casel.org) and positive behavior supports

Swearer et al., 2012

Use IEP process to address bullying-related needs

Walk A Mile In Their Shoes
Bullying and the Child with Special Needs

AbilityPath.org
A Report and Guide from AbilityPath.org

- Social skills

- Self-advocacy skills

- Speech/language development

- Coping strategies

- Enhanced supervision

Panel Discussion

District Efforts to Address Bullying with Students with Disabilities

Panel Participants

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Broward County Public Schools,
Curriculum Supervisor for Diversity, Cultural Outreach and Prevention

Kathy Bowles
Duval County Public Schools
Supervisor for Safe and Healthy Schools

Kim Mazauskas
Palm Beach County School District
Bullying Prevention/Intervention Coordinator

Discussion Questions

- Does your district assess bullying on the school or district level, beyond the state and federal requirements, and if so, how?

- How do you coordinate efforts at the local level (both at the district and school levels) to address bullying issues for students with special needs?

- Has your district developed ways to meet the unique challenges associated with investigating reports of bullying of and/or by ESE students?

- What are some of the challenges you and others in your district and schools have faced regarding bullying and students with disabilities and how are you overcoming some of these challenges?

- What advice/suggestions do you have for others? (Lessons learned?)

Resources

- FDOE's Office of Safe Schools' Website - resources & links for educators, parents, & students http://www.fldoe.org/safeschools/bullying.asp

- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) – bullying prevention information and resources http://www.nasponline.org/resources/bullying/index.aspx

- U.S. Health and Human Services website – resources for special needs children http://www.stopbullying.gov/

- Bully Free World – Special Needs toolkit http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com/toolkit

- AbilityPath.org – bullying resources for students with disabilities http://www.abilitypath.org/areas-of-development/learning--schools/bullying/

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